



NEWS

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District 64 Reports Strong and Stable ISAT Scores for 2009; Illinois School Report Cards for 2009 Available Online

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 students performed extremely well again on the Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) administered in March 2009, according to Larry Sorensen, Director of Technology Planning & Assessments. In addition, Mr. Sorensen reported to the Board of Education at its October 26 meeting that all schools and the District made "Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)" toward goals established by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The state required that 70% of students scored in the "meets or exceeds" category on the 2009 assessments, among its other guidelines.

All District 64 students in grades 3-8 were tested in math and reading. "District 64 scores remain very strong in these areas when compared to the past four years," Mr. Sorensen stated. In math, at least 92.4% of District 64 students in those grades scored in the "meets or exceeds" categories. In reading, at least 89.6% of students in the same grades scored in the "meets or exceeds" groups.

Students in selected grades also took assessments in science and in writing in spring 2009. "Student performance also remains stable in science," Mr. Sorensen noted. Students in grades 4 and 7 took the science assessment, with at least 93.2% of students in those grades scoring in the "meets or exceeds" categories. Reintroduced in 2007, a writing assessment was taken by students in grades 3, 5, 6 and 8 this year, with at least 73.4% of students scoring in the "meets or exceeds" category.

Mr. Sorensen pointed out that the ISAT format had been the same for four years. "This allows the District to track the performance of the same groups of students as they have advanced through our schools," he added. The percentage of students who "exceeded" standards in math increased from 21.4% as grade 5 students in 2006 to 48.5% as 8th graders this past spring. In reading, the percentage of students who scored in the "meets or exceeds" category had grown from 87.8% when they were in grade 5 four years ago to 94.1% as 8th graders in 2009.

"Going forward, we will use ISAT data in a variety of ways to improve instruction and learning," Mr. Sorensen remarked. "We share specific results with school principals, curriculum specialists and teachers to analyze the data and plan for improvement. ISAT information also is used to help make decisions on curriculum needs," he added.

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School District 64/add one

District 64 is firmly committed to maintaining this strong level of student performance on the ISATs, Superintendent Sally Pryor affirmed. The District's new strategic plan draft includes as a parameter: "Student performance on the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISATs) will always compare favorably with other high-achieving districts."

ISAT results, however, are only one component of District 64's more comprehensive view of student progress measured through its unique Educational Ends scorecard. The scorecard was developed as a way to track growth as District 64 seeks to fulfill its goal of educating the whole child, Dr. Pryor stated.

"The Educational Ends track student growth across the entire curriculum – not just the ISAT subjects – as well as the other areas of learning that District 64 values, such as critical thinking and problem-solving, social-emotional development, physical education, and the fine arts," Dr. Pryor observed. "The Educational Ends are measured by both standardized tests, such as the ISAT, as well as locally developed assessments and performance activities," she noted. The scorecard can be viewed on the District 64 Web site: www.d64.org.

In other news, District 64 reported that the 2009 Illinois School Report Card for each school as well as the District also are available online via the District 64 Web site or in school offices. The Report Card showed that for overall performance, 93.1% of District 64 students meet or exceed the Illinois Learning Standards, compared to only 79.8% of students across the state.

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